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**Environment Department Advises “BOIL WATER ORDER” for  
La Association de Agua de Los Brazos**

(Santa Fe, NM) –The New Mexico Environment Department’s (NMED) Drinking Water Bureau has advised La Association de Agua de Los Brazos to issue a “boil water order” for its consumers.

La Association de Agua de Los Brazos serves approximately 50 consumers in Rio Arriba County, located approximately 15 miles southeast of the village of Chama on New Mexico on State Road 512. The village water system was put on a “boil water advisory” on Saturday, July 17, 2004, due to bacteriological contamination that exceeded the Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) for *E.coli*. NMED requires that the system owner and operator notify all customers served by that system of this finding. **This boil water advisory does not affect the Los Brazos Co-op water system.**

Consumers of the La Association de Agua de Los Brazos water system are advised to boil water for five minutes before drinking, cooking, and dishwashing.

The presence of *E. coli* in water indicates that the water may have been in contact with sewage or animal wastes, and could contain disease-causing organisms. Most strains of *E. coli* are harmless and live in the intestines of healthy humans and animals. However, a positive test for *E. coli* in the drinking water supply may indicate the presence of dangerous strains of *E. coli* or other disease-causing organisms, which are sometimes found in sewage or animal wastes. These types of organisms may cause severe gastrointestinal illness and, in rare cases, even death. Children, the elderly, and immuno-compromised individuals are at an increased risk for illness.

Actions have been and will be further initiated to identify the possible source(s) of contamination, complete any mechanical repairs if applicable, establish an acceptable chlorine residual at the source water(s) infiltration galleries, storage tank and throughout the water system with approved treatment techniques, flushing and field monitoring. In addition, the Drinking Water Bureau will continue to assist with trouble-shooting to identify the source of the problem along with the assistance of their contractor, New Mexico Rural Water Association.

The New Mexico Department of Health has also been notified and will remain on alert for any health effects linked to this water quality issue. Consumers of the water system may call (505) 827-0006 or (505) 476-3028, if they have any water-related health concerns.

For more information contact Chris Serazio, Env. Specialist, NMED, at (505) 827-1400 x.1026 or Jon Goldstein, Communications Director, NMED at (505) 827-0314.

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